

EXHIBIT B

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

Ebony Johnson-Kee, as Proposed Administrator of the)
Estate of Sharief Russell Jr., Deceased,)
Plaintiffs,)
vs.)
Sarah Marie Spadafina, MD, and The Floating Hospital)
(Incorporated),)
Defendants.)

)

**DECLARATION OF
MEREDITH TORRES**

1. I am a Senior Attorney in the General Law Division, Office of the General Counsel, Department of Health and Human Services (the “Department”). I am familiar with the official records of administrative tort claims maintained by the Department as well as with the system by which those records are maintained.

2. The Department has a Claims Office that maintains in a computerized database a record of administrative tort claims filed with the Department, including those filed with respect to federally supported health centers that have been deemed to be eligible for Federal Tort Claims Act malpractice coverage.

3. As a consequence, if an administrative tort claim had been filed with the Department with respect to *The Floating Hospital* its approved delivery sites, , or its employees) and/or qualified contractors, a record of that filing would be maintained in the Claims Office database.

4. I have caused a search of the Claims Office database to be conducted and found no record of an administrative tort claim filed by *Ebony Johnson-Kee, as proposed Administrator of the Estate of Sharief Russell, Jr., Deceased*, and/or an authorized representative relating to *The Floating Hospital and Dr. Sarah Marie Spadafina*.

5. I have also reviewed official Agency records and determined that *The Floating Hospital*, was deemed eligible for Federal Tort Claims Act malpractice coverage effective January 1, 2018, and that its coverage has continued without interruption since that time. The Secretary of Health and Human Services' authority to deem entities as Public Health Service employee under 42 U.S.C. § 233 (g) has been delegated to the Associate Administrator, Bureau of Primary Health Care, Health Resources and Services Administration. A copy of the notification issued by the Associate Administrator, Bureau of Primary Health Care, Health Resources and Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services to *The Floating Hospital*, is attached to this declaration as Exhibit 1.

6. I have also reviewed the employment records submitted by *The Floating Hospital*, on behalf of defendant, *Dr. Sarah M. Spadafina*, and have determined that *Dr. Sarah M. Spadafina* was an employee of *The Floating Hospital*, at the time of the incidents giving rise to this suit.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct. 28 U.S.C. § 1746.

Dated at Washington, DC, this 9th day of February 2021.



MEREDITH TORRES
Senior Attorney, Claims and Employment Law
General Law Division
Office of the General Counsel

Exhibit 1

DEEMING LETTER(s)

FTCA DEEMING NOTICE NO.: 1-F00001049-17-01	GRANT NUMBER: H80CS00268	
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**The Floating Hospital
PO BOX 8397
LONG IS CITY, NY11101**

Dear Sean T Granahan:

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), in accordance with the Federally Supported Health Centers Assistance Act (FSHCAA), as amended, sections 224(g)-(n) of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 233(g)-(n), deems The Floating Hospital to be an employee of the PHS, for the purposes of section 224, effective 1/1/2018 through 12/31/2018.

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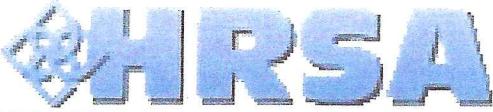
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This action is based on the information provided in your FTCA deeming application, as required under 42 U.S.C. § 233(h), with regard to your entity's: (1) implementation of appropriate policies and procedures to reduce the risk of malpractice and litigation; (2) review and verification of professional credentials and privileges, references, claims history, fitness, professional review organization findings, and licensure status of health professionals; (3) cooperation with the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the defense of claims and actions to prevent claims in the future; and (4) cooperation with DOJ in providing information related to previous malpractice claims history.

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For further information, please contact your HRSA Project Officer as listed on your Notice of Grant Award or the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC) Help Line at 1-877-974-2742 or bphchelpline@hrsa.gov.

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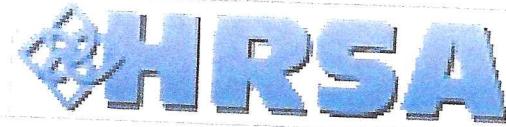
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LONG IS CITY, NY11101

Dear Sean T Granahan:

The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), in accordance with the Federally Supported Health Centers Assistance Act (FSHCAA), as amended, sections 224(g)-(n) of the Public Health Service (PHS) Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 233(g)-(n), deems The Floating Hospital to be an employee of the PHS, for the purposes of section 224, effective 1/1/2020 through 12/31/2020.

Section 224(a) of the PHS Act provides liability protection under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), 28 U.S.C. §§ 1346(b), 2672, or by alternative benefits provided by the United States or related functions by PHS employees while acting within the scope of such employment. This protection is exclusive of any other civil action or proceeding. Coverage extends to deemed entities and their (1) officers; (2) governing board members; (3) full- and part-time employees; and (4) contractors who are licensed or certified individual health care practitioners providing full-time services (i.e., on average at least 32½ hours per week for the entity for the period of the contract), or, if providing an average of less than 32½ hours per week of such service, are licensed or certified providers in the fields of family practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, or obstetrics/gynecology. Volunteers are neither employees nor contractors and therefore are not eligible for FTCA coverage under FSHCAA.

This Notice of Deeming Action (NDA) is also confirmation of medical malpractice coverage for both The Floating Hospital and its covered individuals as described above. This NDA, along with documentation confirming employment or contractor status with the deemed entity, may be used to show liability coverage for damage for personal injury, including death, resulting from the performance of medical, surgical, dental, or related functions by PHS employees while acting within the scope of such employment.

In addition, FTCA coverage is comparable to an "occurrence" policy without a monetary cap. Therefore, any coverage limits that may be mandated by other organizations are met.

This action is based on the information provided in your FTCA deeming application, as required under 42 U.S.C. § 233(h), with regard to your entity's: (1) implementation of appropriate policies and procedures to reduce the risk of malpractice and litigation; (2) review and verification of professional credentials and privileges, references, claims history, fitness, professional review organization findings, and licensure status of health professionals; (3) cooperation with the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the defense of claims and actions to prevent claims in the future; and (4) cooperation with DOJ in providing information related to previous malpractice claims history.

Deemed health centers must continue to receive funding under Section 330 of the PHS Act, 42 U.S.C. § 254b, in order to maintain coverage as a deemed PHS employee. If the deemed entity loses its Section 330 funding, such coverage will end immediately upon termination of the grant. In addition to the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, every deemed health center is expected to follow HRSA's FTCA-related policies and procedures, which may be found online at <http://www.bphc.hrsa.gov>.

For further information regarding FTCA, please contact the Health Center Program Support (Formerly the BPHC Helpline) at 877-464-4772, option 1, or using the [BPHC Contact Form](#).

A printer version document only. The document may contain some accessibility challenges for the screen reader users. To access same information, a fully 508 compliant accessible HTML version is available on the HRSA Electronic Handbooks in the FTCA Folder. If you need more information, please contact the BPHC Helpline at 877-974-BPHC (2742); Weekdays from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM ET.